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REMINISCENCES OF WEBER.

A merchant and an excellent violinist of a Saxon frontier-town was so great an admirer of Weber that he undertook the expensive journey to Dresden, to hear Weber's operas. One day, in 1825, he arrived there, to hear *Euryanthe*. Animated by the desire to become personally acquainted with the master, he sought out the latter's residence and placed himself opposite its windows.

The chamber musician, Schmiedel, who was acquainted with the musical enthusiast, happened to pass and learn why he was standing in the rain. He withdrew hastily, and in a few minutes came back with an invitation from Weber. Weber greeted the gentleman, who entered with a beating heart, in the following amiable words, "I learn that you are fond of my music, and wish to see me. But I cannot allow that my admirers should stand in the rain for my sake."

On the merchant remarking that he had to-day become—after *Freischütz* and *Preciosa*—acquainted with *Euryanthe*, Weber remarked, "Then I hope that *Euryanthe* may become as great a favorite with you as the *Freischütz*. However, do not expect to hear a second *Freischütz*; *Euryanthe* is totally different music. There I have pleased the learned men who reproached me with having thought, in the *Freischütz*, too much of the multitude. Good God! I thought at that time neither of the multitude nor of connoisseurs, but only of the poetry, which I loved with all my heart. But that is the way with the critics; one is always supposed to have selfish intentions. When I composed the *Freischütz*, I did not imagine that my music would so quickly find its way deep into the hearts of my countrymen."

On the merchant requesting the privilege of taking a glance at the master's handwriting, Weber, smiling, showed him a score of *Oberon*, the second act of which he was just setting to music. "That is for the English," he said. In this opera I have been obliged to resume my old style, namely, to produce as many clear melodies as possible."

Weber now invited his admirer to stay to dinner, and, as he now displayed all his amiability, the guest could not help saying that he had imagined the celebrated master to be quite a different person—that he had thought him more haughty.

"I am proud," replied Weber, "but God knows not haughty. I have a heart, and I hope the *Freischütz* shows that to every one who has one himself. I know that there are people who call me haughty. Certainly I look haughtily upon every one approaching me impudently; but I receive, with hearty gratitude, those who esteem me, and I never forget that all we have comes from above."

In the evening Weber conducted his *Euryanthe*. The enthusiast, who had to depart the following day, sent to the master the finest laurel wreath he could get, as an apology for the theft he had committed, in secretly taking away Weber's pen with him.

The quoted sayings of Weber throw light on his productions and on his development.

Weber says that when composing the *Freischütz*, he thought neither of the multitude nor of the connoisseurs, but only of the poetry, of which he was very fond. We see this originality and quickness of composition in every passage of that beautiful opera. But how speedily has the disturbing influence of the world averted that creative geni-

us—like so many others—from its free development, and how painfully touching is the confession that in *Euryanthe* he pleased the learned men. Also in *Oberon*, in which to please the English—he resumed his old style of clear melody, he was unable to compose with that ingenious freedom and freshness of mind which so enchants us in the *Freischütz*.

NED PETERS AND HIS STYLE OF ORGAN-PLAYING.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

BUFFALO, May, 1859.

DEAR SIR:—I am afflicted with a kind of organist that I wish you could kill or cure. I gave him all my pile of genuine organ music a while ago, in the hope that I should occasionally hear some of it. But no! Perhaps one end or the other of a piece may come, six bars out of something that sounds organ-like; but the next measure is Ned Peters, and nothing but Ned Peters to the end. Now Ned is very clever, and really knows something about music, and considering all things, does virtuously. In nowise to be confounded with or taken for Old Ned! He is young and honest. For all that, he will play Ned with our organ, and Ned Peters, too.

Why, to hear some of his interludes, you would think the whole chromatic scale was lit on by a flock of appoggiaturas, all fluttering their wings, and ready to fly off again at once. All sorts of similitudes occur to me while he is playing, but are rather evanescent. One thing is particularly disagreeable: it is the way he has of jumping up to sit down on the tonic. I never knew him in my life walk right up to the tonic as to a chair, and sit down; but he runs up, his toes being of India-rubber, and, kind of dancing two or three times on every step, gets to the landing-place, turns round, pulls up his coat-tails, gets everything ready, and, instead of gracefully coming subsidingly on the cushion, jumps up a foot at least, and comes down c'swallop! And it's pretty much so when he goes down stairs.

My gracious, what trillings! What runs! What flashes of chain-lightning! What chromatic runs! He isn't at all like Lake, who had studied out the shortest road through the greatest number of burglarious entrances into neighboring keys back to the key of the tune, and whose interludes reminded me of a cavalry review, where the horses all ran away, reared, kicked, snorted, got whipped, spurred, and suddenly wheeled round and stood still, trembling, and just ready to do so again as soon as the next verse was past.

If a hundred horses had suddenly neighed, kicked up their heels, wheeled around, and come to a dead stand-still between every two verses, it would have affected me very much as some of Lake's interludes did. I wonder if they couldn't get up a dragoon stop, and try it.

This fellow is not of that order. He doesn't know much about harmony—I don't mean that Lake did either, though all he did know he trundled out in full uniform every time). No! He is a regular swell sea-saw, who gives you tonic, dominant and subdominant, in all imaginable monotonous successions, and tries to make it seem varied by making the flocks of beach-bird chattering appoggiaturas, shakes, trills, and what not, larger or smaller, making them fly higher or

lower, in masses or single file, 'way up above the tree, or in the tree, or in the tall grass, or even keeps a brood of black Shanghai appoggiaturas, and other slow-paced fowl, to sprawl and trill down cellar.

Now, I say Ned Peters is a clever fellow, and but for this pernicious habit of playing Ned, and nothing else, might Edify us. (Don't, for gracious sake, put either of these names into your "Star Papers," for it's his real name, and he reads you, and would feel hurt.)

I only thought, perhaps it might help you to an illustration or two. You know we anciently held communings touching certain forms of musical development and their possible embodiment in description.

Well, Ned is always on the wing. To hear him the first time you'd say, Why, really now, that was pretty neat. For a self-taught artist that was really well done. But out come more blackbirds every time. By-and-by you hear some of the fowl down cellar,—buzzards, Spanish hens, chittagongs, dorkings, and what not. At last you become convinced that that fellow's fingers are all there are of him. Now, only persuade him to play some true, deep, solemn organ music, written for the organ, and play it conscientiously, just as it is written, and accept my deepest thanks.

I am yours, in the faith of
ORGANIC SIN.

A PICTURE OF HERR JOACHIM.—In an article on the "Pictures of the year," the Saturday Review says: "Violinists have not much reason to be thankful to painters, who rarely either understand the form of their instruments or the manner of performance. Mr. Watts seems to be an exception to this rule. His "Lamplight study, Herr Joachim," is absolutely true in its interpretation of violin playing. The instrument is held as a master holds it, and the hair of the bow presses with due force and touches the strings in the right place; the violin, too, is beautifully drawn. There is great power in the treatment of the face, but Mr. Watts has exaggerated the greenish tones that occur in lamplight. Herr Joachim has so much green in his complexion as to remind us of nothing human, so far as color is concerned, unless it be Mr. Kinglake's written portrait of the Emperor Napoleon when under the influence of mortal fear. Joachim's face is green, his hair is green, his fiddle is green, the hair of his bow is green. The eyes are lustreless, like lamps gone out, and the whole picture has the disadvantage of being terribly chilled in the varnish, so that it seems as if there was a smoke between us and it. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, it is a noble portrait; the massive head is grandly modelled, and the gravity of the face as well as its expression of energy, justly rebukes the Philistines who consider fiddling a light and trifling occupation. To pass one's life in the interpretation of great music as Herr Joachim does, and to bring to the task some true greatness of one's own, is a destiny which, though beyond the reach of most of us, and outside of our faculties and tastes, is at least as noble as common business, and, perhaps, for the full development of modern civilization, almost as necessary."

The music of the gendarmes of the Guard, of Prussia, has just been received with wonderful enthusiasm at Aix la Chapelle.